



**Standing Group of Experts on African swine fever
in the Baltic and Eastern Europe region**
under the GF-TADs umbrella

**Third meeting (SGE ASF3)
Moscow, Russia, 15-16 March 2016**

Final Recommendations

The Standing Group of Experts applauds the quality of the work accomplished by the ASF SGE Experts in the seven countries and recommends that:

General conclusions and recommendations:

- The standing Group of Experts on ASF for Eastern Europe and Baltic region continue to support affected countries, using CVO/OIE Delegate level meetings, expert missions and tailored capacity building activities at national and regional level; one key underlying principle for success be the provision of fully transparent information by countries and the fulfillment of their reporting obligations to the OIE;
- The recommendations of the Standing Group of Experts continue to be implemented by the countries concerned, notably (i) the SGE1 and SGE2 recommendations, respectively on 'ASF situation in wild boar and related prevention and control measures' and 'Biosecurity measures in the different pig production systems'; (ii) the ASF SGE Country mission recommendations;
- The ASF SGE country mission Reports (and subsequent Recommendations) be validated and be made publicly available to all (on the GF-TADs for Europe webpage);
- The next 'full' SGE meeting be organised in Lithuania; the proposed topics be (i) status of implementation of the ASF SGE country mission Recommendations; and (ii) 'depopulation/stamping out procedures as a prevention and control measure; practical aspects related to carcass disposal and disinfection of holdings';
- The possibility to have an ad hoc SGE meeting in the margins of the 84th OIE General Session (Paris / France, 22-27 May 2016) and 27th OIE regional Conference for Europe (Porto / Portugal, first week of October 2016) be explored;
- Moldova and Romania be invited to participate in future SGE meetings and activities, given the risk of introduction of ASF from Ukraine following the recent outbreaks very close to the Moldavian border, with a view to enhancing their preparedness;
- Countries make sure to share any new ASF control tools or methodology with other countries through the GF-TADs Regional Secretariat.

Technical recommendations:

➤ Surveillance

- Passive surveillance is clearly the most effective way of detecting the presence of the disease and has a key role in early detection of ASF. Incentives or obstacles to reporting be explored and awareness campaigns be carried out to motivate and promote disease notification;
- Public-private partnership be improved for strengthening awareness, surveillance, biosecurity, timely and fair compensation of farmers' losses;
- In view of defining surveillance strategy, a risk assessment be carried out including the identification of:
 - Risk areas in the country,
 - Risk production sector (domestic pigs / wild boar),
 - Risk areas in the adjacent territories;
- Surveillance aimed at early detecting the presence of the disease should not be based on serology, and it be addressed to domestic pigs and wild boar;
- Surveillance strategy be tailored to the epidemiological situation (level of risk) and local drivers of infection;
- A methodology to assess the efficiency of passive surveillance be developed and aimed to forecast the minimum number of suspected cases to be expected in the at risk population in both free and infected areas;
- National independent Expert Groups advising the Veterinary Services on ASF policy, wild boar management and surveillance strategies be in place and regularly meet to update their recommendations;
- Marketing, trade of pork and pigs (including illegal) as well as pig breeding at military and prison farms be adequately reflected in risk-based surveillance programmes.

➤ Wild boar management

- Wild boar management is a sophisticated necessary collective activity that has to be adapted to local conditions and practices and that cannot be left only to hunters (or any other player) to decide and Veterinary Services have to be involved at several stages;
- Biosecurity during hunting in infected areas is of paramount importance for protecting both wild boar and domestic pigs; specific measures be developed and implemented;
- Wild boar population reduction can facilitate ASF eradication even though a threshold density for wild boar allowing the fading out of the disease has not been identified yet;
- Wild boar population reduction should be considered, in combination with other control measures, within the framework of a wild boar management strategy aimed at reducing ASF virus contamination of the environment;
- Carcass removal and safe disposal is an efficient disease management option in addition to population control efforts carried out under appropriate biosecurity measures;
- Wild boar population density estimates are not standardised across the SGE countries and comparing this data could be misleading.

➤ Training and awareness campaign

- Joint trainings be provided to veterinarians and other relevant professionals in order to sustainably address surveillance, biosecurity and wild boar management practices (including hunting, carcass utilisation and disposal of offal). Such national workshops gathering the hunting community, forestry and environment agencies and Veterinary Services (public and private components) be organised with the support of experts as soon as possible, to ensure that common disease prevention and eradication goals are understood and shared;
- The potential of online information and teaching tools, mobile data collection and epidemiological decision support systems to facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration and training of professionals and stakeholders at the local, national and international levels be promoted.